

Public Information Statement  
National Weather Service Albany NY  
800 AM EDT Fri Nov 4 2016

...Winter Weather Awareness Week Continues...

October 30 to November 5 is winter weather awareness week in New York and New England.

The following are some terms the national weather service uses to describe winter weather as well as the definitions of watches, warnings and advisories issued for winter weather.

A winter storm outlook is issued prior to a winter storm watch. The outlook is issued when forecasters believe winter storm conditions are possible 3 to 7 days in advance of the storm.

In general a winter storm watch alerts the public to the possibility of a blizzard, heavy snow, heavy freezing rain and or heavy sleet. Winter storm watches are usually issued 24 to 60 hours before the beginning of a winter storm. Since watches are issued so far in advance, there will be times when the storm does not materialize, or changes track, and the watches are canceled.

On the other hand, a warning is issued when hazardous weather is imminent or has already begun. It is issued for conditions which pose a threat to life and property.

The following are the warning headlines issued for winter weather events.

A winter storm warning is issued when hazardous winter weather in the form of heavy snow, or a combination of heavy snow, freezing rain, and or heavy sleet is imminent or occurring. Winter storm warnings are usually issued 12 to 36 hours before the event is expected to begin.

An ice storm warning is issued when a heavy accumulation of one half inch or more of freezing rain is forecast.

A blizzard warning is issued for sustained or gusty winds of 35 mph or more, and falling or blowing snow creating visibilities at or below one quarter mile. These conditions are forecast to persist for at least 3 hours.

A lake effect snow warning is issued when heavy lake effect snow is imminent or occurring.

A wind chill warning is issued when wind chill temperatures are expected to be hazardous to life within only minutes of exposure to the cold.

An advisory is issued for less serious weather conditions. Specific advisories will alert you to weather that would have a significant effect on motorists, outdoor activities, or public events. The following are the advisory headlines issued for winter weather events.

A winter weather advisory is issued for accumulations of snow, freezing rain, freezing drizzle and or sleet which will cause inconveniences, but if sufficient caution is exercised, do not usually threaten life and property.

A lake effect snow advisory is issued when accumulations of lake effect snow will cause inconvenience.

A wind chill advisory is issued when wind chill temperatures are expected to be a hazard to life with prolonged exposure if caution is not exercised.

NOAA weather radio offers one way to receive immediate relay of any winter weather warnings. Many local television and radio stations also broadcast weather alerts. For weather and hydrologic information on the go, simply go to [mobile.weather.gov](http://mobile.weather.gov) and provide your location or zip code. This will get you the latest National Weather Service forecasts.

\$\$

DiRienzo